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Japan's New Premier.

To see a man returned to active political life as Premier of his country at the age of seventy-seven years is as unusual as it is significant. Count Shigenobu Okuma has had a remarkable history, and his experience and wise statesmanship will be able to secure for Japan at this critical period the best possible management of her affairs, internal as well as external. He has been successively minister of finance, minister of agriculture, foreign minister, and prime minister of his country. He resigned from the Cabinet in 1881 because his colleagues would not ask the Crown to promulgate a constitution as soon as it was possible to do so. He was the founder and leader of the Progressive party, and is of course a pronounced Liberal. He has had a wonderful influence in his country, even when he was not in power, and at all times has been a fearless critic of the government's policy when he thought it wrong. It has been said that he is the only "grand old man" left, now that Bismarck, Gladstone, Li Hung Chang, and the rest have gone. His wide knowledge, wisdom, judgment, and ability are all the more remarkable when we remember that he has never been outside of Japan, and that all his experience of the world apart from his own country has come from books and contact with men at home. His position as the founder of Waseda University and its honorary president have given him the title of the "sage of Waseda."

The Count has announced that his military policy will look to "an augmentation of the Japanese national defenses compatible with the resources of the Empire." In view of the ruinous burdens of taxation under which the country is staggering, this means a definite abandonment of any aggressive military policy and the adoption of a scheme of peaceful industrial and financial growth and development. It is said that he is the first statesman to ask the organized press of the country for counsel and aid, and the Japanese Association of Journalists prepared for him recommendations concerning policies and the membership of the new cabinet. In addressing a company of Japanese and foreign journalists he pleaded for the removal of misunderstanding and jealousy between countries, and declared that fortification of such peaceful countries as New Zealand and Australia is due to this unjustified suspicion. Speaking of America, he said that she had no enemy, and that the Panama Canal needed no fortification. In an article in the *Independent* in 1913 on "Japan and Panama," the Count discussed the effect of the opening of the canal on trade between Japan and America, saying that it would be a "great contributor to the progress of civilization and human welfare." He also remarked that the "problem of Japanese exclusion, which was merely sensational in origin, will terminate in the near future, as the two nations come to understand each other better."

He has always opposed the exclusion agreement, and stands for fair dealing with his nation on the same terms which are accorded to all other nations. He declared in one of his essays that when a treaty seeks to enact laws restricting Japanese immigration, the terms of that restriction should be "analogous and even identical with those applicable to the peoples of other great powers or civilized countries." In talking with a group of missionaries not long ago, he said that the problem of Japanese-American relations could not be solved by diplomacy or legislation—least of all by war—which would only aggravate the international animosity. The only real solution was that of the brotherhood of man as set forth by the Christian religion.

To reduce the taxation of Japan; to clean up the scandals in the navy; to reduce the armament increase—these are but a few of the tasks which are before the new Premier. That he is and will be first and foremost a peacemaker we are confident. He is the president of the Japan Peace Society and is an active peace worker. He was one of the speakers at the annual meeting of the American Peace Society of Japan the last of April.

Death of the Baroness von Suttner.



Courtesy of the Chicago Peace Society

It is with feelings of the deepest sadness and a sense of personal loss that we chronicle the death on June 21 of the Baroness Bertha von Suttner at her home in Vienna, Austria. This news will bring great sorrow to the peace circles of every land, for the movement has been deprived of one of the finest, most influential, devoted, and capable workers it has ever had. A more detailed account of her life and service will be given in our next issue.